CLAIMS

WE CLAIM:

1. A method of treating diseases or conditions caused by type III hypersensitive reactions in a human or non-human animal, the method comprising the step of administering to the animal a member selected from the group consisting of a conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) and a substance which is converted in the animal to CLA in an amount effective to reduce inflammation caused by the type III hypersensitive reactions in the animal.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the disease or condition treated is selected from the group consisting of localized Arthus reaction, rheumatoid arthritis, serum sickness, glomerulonephritis, systemic lupus and erythematosus.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the disease treated is rheumatoid arthritis.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein CLA is administered in the administering step.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the CLA is selected from the group consisting of a free conjugated linoleic acid, an ester of a conjugated linoleic acid, a non-toxic salt of a conjugated linoleic acid, an active isomer of a conjugated linoleic acid, an active metabolite of a conjugated linoleic acid, and a mixture thereof.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the free conjugated linoleic acid is selected from the group consisting of an 18:2(9c,11t) isomer, an 18:2(9t,11c) isomer, an 18:2(10c,12t) isomer and an 18:2 (10t,12c) isomer.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the animal is selected from the group consisting of a mammal and an avian.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the mammal is selected from the group consisting of a human, a non-human primate, a horse, a canine, a feline, a rodent, a porcine, a bovine, a caprine and an ovine.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the mammal is selected from the group consisting of a human, a horse, a canine and a feline.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the mammal is a human.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the administering step comprises a method selected from the group consisting of oral delivery, intramuscular injection, intravenous injection, transdermal delivery, transmucosal delivery and parenteral delivery.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the administering step comprises oral delivery.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the CLA is added to a food and the food is consumed by the animal.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the food contains 0.01% to 5% of CLA by weight of the food.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the food contains 0.05% to 2% of CLA by weight of the food.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the CLA is administered in a dosage of between about 0.001 g/kg and 1 g/kg body weight of the animal.